Syndromic Surveillance-
Meaningful Use Implementation Guidance

Background

The vision of the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act of 2009 is to improve the health of Americans and the performance of the nation's health system through health information technology. It is no longer enough for healthcare providers to purchase an electronic medical records system; the purpose of HITEC[1] is to ensure that these systems are interoperable and that providers use these systems in a meaningful way.

One of the HITECH goals is to improve Population and Public Health. Achieving this goal requires that:
- Providers use certified records systems with the capability to exchange information among disparate systems; and
- Nationwide standards for information exchange are established and used;
- Patient record privacy and security is maintained.

Eligible professionals and hospitals must complete at least one of the available core public health objectives to meet Stage 1 Meaningful Use. Syndromic Surveillance (SS) is required for eligible hospitals in Stage 2 of Meaningful Use.

This document describes the process for meeting the SS Public Health Option in order to receive incentive payments. Hospitals and providers are able to apply for SS approval.

There are three steps to Meaningful Use:
1. Acquire a certified EHR system or module,
2. Use the system as the rules require, and
3. Attest that the data was submitted as required.

Technical assistance for providers is available through a Regional Extension Center Program[2] (REC). Monetary incentives[3] are available to providers who are meaningful users.

Eligible Hospitals/Providers Seeking Meaningful Use Attestation

Hospitals/Providers:
UDOH is ready to accept tests of submission on June 1, 2012

If your facility wishes to begin tests of submission, please fill out the SS intent form and email to the SS Coordinator (elr@utah.gov) or fax it to (801) 538-9923 (Attn: SS Coordinator – J. Anderson).

Message Transmission
Messages must be submitted in a secured manner. UDOH is capable of receiving messages through PHIN-MS, direct connections (sFTP or TCP), or via the Utah Health Information Network[4] (UHIN).

Message Format
Messages may be in HL7 v. 2.5.1 or HL7 v. 2.3.1 data exchange format using the appropriate PHIN messaging guide for syndromic surveillance[5]. Submitters will validate their message format using Message Quality Framework[6] prior to submitting to public health.

Message Content
Messages from emergency department and urgent care facilities should contain the data elements outlined in the PHIN messaging guide for syndromic surveillance[5] or, for inpatient and ambulatory clinical care facilities, the ISDS Guidelines for Syndromic Surveillance[7].

To qualify for Stage 1 Meaningful Use, you must attempt to send a message to public health until you are successful. In this case, "successful" means to send an MQF-approved message with the appropriate core data elements and have it transmitted securely and received in appropriate format at Utah Department of Health.

When the test is successful, public health strongly encourages all facilities to continue to submit emergency department, urgent care, inpatient and ambulatory clinical care EHR data, as it will be required in future stages of Meaningful Use. The SS coordinator will work with you to start that process.

Resources

1. Office of the National Coordinator- Regulations and Information on Meaningful Use
   http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=2996&mode=2
2. Regional Extension Center for Utah – Health Insight
   http://www.healthinsight.org/Internal/REC.html
3. Utah's Medicaid Electronic Health Record Incentive Payment Program
   http://health.utah.gov/medicaid/provhtml/HIT.htm
4. Utah Health Information Network (UHIN)
   http://mychie.org/community/
5. PHIN Messaging Guide For Syndromic Surveillance: Emergency Department And Urgent Care Data
   http://www.cdc.gov/phin/library/guides/PHIN_MSG_Guide_for_SS_ED_and_UC_Data_v1_1.pdf
6. Public Health Information Network's Message Quality Framework (MQF)
   http://www.cdc.gov/phin/resources/certification/MQFtool-overview.html
7. ISDS Draft Guidelines for Syndromic Surveillance Using Inpatient and Ambulatory Clinical Care EHR Data
   http://www.syndromic.org/uploads/files/MU_DraftGuideline_FINAL_pdf(1).pdf

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Key Contacts for Syndromic Surveillance

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